

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lli, 7.

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A DISCOURSE,

Preached at the Dedication of the Universalist Meeting House, Exeter, N. H. August 12th, 1832.

BY THOMAS F. KING.

"I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." Psalms cxxii, 1, 2.

To say that man is a devotional being, is but to repeat what history and observation have abundantly confirmed. And it is a truth equally apparent to the enlightened christian philosopher, that the religious propensity so universally developed in human nature, has been productive of much disquietude and misery. This, as a matter of course, has resulted from a perversion of the propensity just named. In its having sought its gratification on unworthy objects, wholly unsuited to the nature of man as an intellectual and moral being.

The heathen nations, deprived of the light of revelation, have invariably formed unto themselves gods in the likeness of their depraved passions, and the character of the worship which they have rendered to these idols, has perpetuated their mental slavery with all its associated evils.

Previous to the call of the patriarch Abraham, idolatry was universally practiced by all nations. All had forgotten the gracious Author of their being—the earth bore not on its bosom an altar consecrated to his worship. Not a human tongue was heard to lisp his praise, nor was there a human heart which beat high with the pulsations of gratitude at the recollection of his beneficence. The whole earth presented a scene of widespread moral desolation, to which no human foresight could have assigned a limit, and which might have been perpetuated indefinitely, had not the Sovereign Ruler of events, interposed in behalf of our revolted race. The call of Abraham, who is justly denominated the father of the faithful, marked a new and most important era in the history of man, whose influence will extend to the remotest generations. By taking this distinguished individual and his posterity into a covenant union with himself, and by constituting them the depositaries of his will, he prepared the way for the successful establishment of the legal dispensation, and to this establishment, the post-diluvian world is indebted for the first dawning of spiritual light. It erected a successful barrier to roll back the tide of superstition and idolatry, and it offered a powerful aid in the development of the religious character of the Israelites.

You are aware, no doubt, that according to the positive enactments of the Levitical economy, Jerusalem was the place appointed for the worship of the Most High, as well before as after the building of the temple by king Solomon. To this city the tribes of Israel were accustomed to repair three times a year to offer up their adorations to the God of the whole earth.

To a pious Jew the recurrence of those periods was hailed with peculiar satisfaction. There were many delightful associations connected with the place whither he would then direct his steps. There the ark of the covenant, which God had made with his fathers, was deposited—there the Shechinah, or the divine presence was gloriously displayed, from between the Cherubims over the mercy seat, and there he would participate the friendship of kindred spirits.

It is by no means an improbable conjecture, that such sentiments and feelings would animate the bosom of a devout Israelite while journeying to the place where his countrymen were wont to offer their united thanksgivings, to the Maker and Governor of the universe.

This is expressed with a beautiful simplicity by the Psalmist in our text and its immediate connexion. "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companion's sakes I will now say, Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good."

Let it be distinctly remembered, however, that the appointment of one particular place for the worship of Almighty God, was an arrangement peculiar to the Jewish dispensation, and was never designed to be of universal obligation. Indeed a moment's reflection is sufficient to convince us that this would be utterly impracticable. The law which made this duty obligatory upon the Jews, was abrogated by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as you may learn from what he said to the woman of Samaria, recorded in the 4th chapter of John's Gospel. To those who are acquainted with their Bibles, it will scarcely be necessary to observe, that the Samaritans had corrupted the Mosaic institutions and changed the place of worship from Jerusalem to Mount Gerizim. These facts were the occasion of the most unrelenting hostility between the two nations. It appears from the account of the evangelical historian, that our Lord in travelling through Samaria entered a city called Sychar, and being somewhat weary with his journey, sat himself down to rest on a well which was greatly valued by the Samaritans, as having been once the property of the patriarch Jacob. While seated on this well which was consecrated by so many sacred recollections, a female approached for the purpose of drawing water, of whom our Lord solicited the favor of a drink. This solicitation, excited the surprise of "the woman of Samaria," knowing as she did the inveterate prejudices which subsisted between the Jews and Samaritans, and she therefore asks, "How is it that thou being a Jew, asketh drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? (for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.)"

Our gracious Master availed himself of this opportunity to apprise her of the dignity of his character, as the anointed Messiah, by saying, "if thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence then, hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again;

but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life."

The answer which the woman returned to these remarks of our Lord, shows that her views of the import of his language were exceedingly gross; for she said, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly."

This unexpected familiarity with her private history, seemed to fix her attention, and to inspire her mind with a conviction that she was honored with the notice of a most extraordinary personage.

"Sir," said she, "I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jesusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me; the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father; ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Thus my hearers, you perceive from this luminous statement of the Savior, that under the gospel dispensation which he came to establish, every place is the house of God, where the children of men assemble with pure hearts to celebrate his praise, or to invoke his blessing—whether it be in a private dwelling—in a magnificent temple, or under the wide canopy of heaven. God looks at the heart, and as he fills immensity with his presence, he is accessible at all times and in every place, to those who seek him in sincerity.

Let no one suppose that these remarks are designed in the remotest degree to undervalue the public worship of the Most High. No, the blessings which are directly and indirectly associated with public worship, when conducted according to the spirit of the christian institutions, are so manifold, and withal so palpable, that I should be recreant to the clearest dictates of my understanding and conscience, were I to utter a syllable calculated to beget in your minds an indifference to this subject. Every sentiment of my soul—every feeling of my heart responds to the language of the Royal Psalmist "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand in thy gates, O Jerusalem."

Will it be going too far, for us to affirm, that the public worship of God is a duty which is founded upon the nature and condition of the human race, and a duty which is especially binding upon those who live in this happy country, where every man is free to worship according to that mode which his own judgment tells him is most accordant to sound reason, and the holy scriptures?

Who in this enlightened day, will assume the fearful responsibility of saying, that there should

be no public expression of our sense of dependence upon God—no public recognition of his temporal and spiritual mercies, and no public altar from which our common supplications may ascend to the throne of the heavenly grace? Surely no man will do this, who values as he ought the moral health of the community, or whose mind is impressed with suitable reverence for the Author of his being.

I am aware, my hearers, while making these remarks, of the extreme suspicion with which every argument offered by a clergyman designed to enforce this duty upon his auditors, is apt to be regarded, by certain men whose minds are under the blighting influence of scepticism. The most conclusive arguments and proofs which the christian minister can offer and urge upon the consideration of his fellow men, in reference to this duty, are immediately referred to his selfishness. They think of his profession, and content themselves by saying with a sneer, that his living depends upon their success. They go upon the illiberal principle that moral honesty is incompatible with the clerical profession—that because some have abused the influence which very naturally attaches to the sacred office, therefore, all are reckless of truth, and honor, and human happiness. Every man's arguments on all subjects should be estimated according to their intrinsic worth; for it should be recollected that truth is *truth*, by whomsoever it may be proclaimed.

What then are the arguments in support of the proposition, that the public worship of God is a duty which we are all bound to discharge, when our circumstances interpose no barrier to its regular performance? Every argument on this interesting subject centres in one point, viz. man's entire and constant dependance on his Maker. From the commencement of his existence to its termination, he is the object of a watchful and benignant providence. His very being and all that appertains to it—the faculties of his mind—his moral capacities and enjoyments, together with all the pleasures of sense and appetite, are gifts bestowed on him by the sovereign goodness of his God. And let me appeal to your understandings and your hearts, and ask you, if he be not bound by these considerations, to acknowledge by appropriate acts of devotion, his sense of obligation to the liberal donor of these favors? Is there a man within the sound of my voice who is yet free from the madness and folly of Atheism, that will deliberately deny the relevancy of this reasoning? It is, my respected hearers, the benefits which God has conferred on our race, that lay the foundation of his claims to our gratitude, and demonstrate with the clearness and certainty of mathematical precision the reasonableness of the service he requires.

The higher faculties of our nature, such as are most free from the impulse of bewildering passions, concur with the mandates of revelation in urging us to "serve the Lord with gladness—to come before his presence with singing—to enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise—to be thankful unto him and bless his name."

Besides, it should be recollected, that in doing all this, he confers no benefit upon his Maker, indeed such an idea can find no place in the creed of a rational christian. No, in the highest and holiest exercises of our piety whether in the public sanctuary or in the retirement of our closets, so far from benefitting God, we are directly benefitting ourselves—we are pursuing the very course which he has directed—and which he has promised to bless to the increase of our spiritual knowledge, and the consequent enlargement of our happiness as his intellectual and moral offspring.

I advance these opinions the more confidently, because I believe they eminently accord with

enlightened christian experience. So far as relates to this point I care not by what creed a man may worship—whether he call himself a Catholic or a Protestant, if his heart has ever been deeply penetrated with sentiments of gratitude to God, he knows that this exercise of the affections is accompanied with the purest enjoyment of which his nature is susceptible. And if he be a candid man, he will acknowledge without the least hesitancy that these exercises have a most intimate and abiding connexion with his growth in the graces and virtues of the christian character. The absolute independence of Jehovah will not permit us to indulge the idea, that any services in which we can engage, can add to his essential happiness—it is enough for us to know that they exert an important influence on our own character and happiness; sufficiently to operate as an effectual motive to persevere therein.

I am not contending merely for the external act of presenting ourselves regularly every Sabbath in the public sanctuary. It is quite possible for us to do this without deriving any profit thereby, either to our understandings or our hearts. We may do this because it is a custom of the place where we reside. We may do this either to exhibit, or acquaint ourselves with the fashions of the day. It is to be feared that such unworthy motives exert too great an influence in filling some of our houses of public worship. But can it kindle a holy joy in the christian's bosom to know that multitudes, Sabbath after Sabbath, flock to the house of prayer for purposes like these?

As a christian minister, I would ever contend with affectionate zeal, for the exercise of personal devotion in the sanctuary of our God, on the ground that holiness becometh the house of the Lord forever.

I have now arrived at that stage of my discourse in which it seems proper to notice particularly the occasion that hath brought so goodly a number of us together. You will believe me brethren, when I assure you, that the services in which we are now engaged, cause a peculiar joy to thrill through my heart. It is an occasion to which many of you have long looked forward with intense interest, and I trust it is one to which many of you will look back, with equal pleasure. This neat and commodious edifice, the fruit of your well directed and persevering exertions, in the cause of liberal christianity, is now to be dedicated to the appropriate purposes for which it was erected.

In the presence, therefore, of the Supreme Architect of the heavens and the earth, who inhabites eternity, and in view of our accountableness to him for the employment of all our powers, and privileges and blessings, we solemnly, and in profound reverence of his character, dedicate, and set apart, this building to his service, while we humbly invoke his acceptance of the offering. May this pulpit henceforth become an altar from which your united hearts shall send forth the incense of grateful love, in the name of the one Mediator between God and men. We dedicate this pulpit to the defence of the being, the character and government of God. To the illustration of that plan of divine mercy developed in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to the constant inculcation of those moral and religious duties which grow out of our relations to God and our fellow men.

We dedicate this pulpit to the unyielding—though liberal support of the great doctrine of the Universal Restoration, believing as we do, that it embraces the crowning excellence of the gospel. This, my brethren, is a doctrine which can, and which ought to be maintained in the very spirit of kindness. It throws a sacredness around the character of Jehovah, and it attaches an importance to the mission, which no candid man can claim for other, and different views of

these subjects. How exciting—how rapturous are the moral associations connected with this doctrine! All that is sublime in conception, or valuable in hope, is comprehended in its principles. Yea, you may give to your imagination its utmost flight—you may bid it fly with the rapidity of lightning and bid it explore the almost boundless regions of possibility, and on its return it can report to you no greater good than what is implied in universal restoration.

God knows that we are sincere, when we say as in his holy presence, *we love this doctrine*. And why should we not love it? Are not the principles involved in it the most honorable to the Deity, considered as a Father, and a righteous moral Governor, of any that have ever been propagated under the sanction of the christian name? We but echo the sentiments of your understandings and your hearts, when we answer yes! There is not a benevolent man on earth but what loves this doctrine, at least in theory. Nor is there a pious christian living, but what ardently prays it may, at last prove true. It is, therefore, with the most joyful emotions that we devote this pulpit to the enlightened defence of the glad tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people.

The seats within this sacred enclosure, we dedicate to the occupancy of devout worshippers of the one Supreme Jehovah, who shall with every returning Sabbath, repair hither with their wives and little ones to participate in the delightful service of social worship.

To the brethren composing the Society which will henceforth assemble for religious purposes, in this house of prayer, I must be permitted personally, to offer my congratulation, as well as to present the congratulations of my brethren in the ministry of reconciliation. This event marks a new era in your existence as a Society. You are now in a rapid state of preparation for the stated ministrations of the word: suffer me, therefore, to exhort you not to neglect the assembling of yourselves together.

The subjects which will be, from time to time, offered for your consideration from this consecrated desk, are of the highest importance, both in reference to your condition here, and hereafter. Here, we humbly hope the doctrine of God our Savior will drop as the rain, and that his speech will distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.

There is a sanctifying influence ever attendant upon the public worship of the Most High, when that worship is faithfully conducted. We meet in the house of prayer on one undistinguished level. The artificial distinctions which are necessarily created by a state of civil society, are all left at the threshold of the sanctuary—and we enter as children of one common father.

In this house you will be taught the great love wherewith God hath loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sin, and that this love was manifested in the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Here, you will be taught the superintending providence of God—that his kindness and care extend over all his works, numbering even the very hairs of our head—that he adapts his dispensation to the character of his moral offspring so that a wholesome discipline is exercised over all, which will result in universal holiness. But above all you will be taught here, that life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel—and that all the perplexing cares and sorrows which are incident to our mortal pilgrimage, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in the consummation of God's benevolent design.

Will you not repair hither with grateful hearts, and feast yourselves on this spiritual food which the Lord hath prepared before the face of all people? Your prosperity as a religious Society will

depend upon the faithfulness with which you discharge the obligations that are connected with your profession of faith in Christ as the Universal Savior.

God grant that you become as lights—as shining lights in this benighted world, and that by the power of your example, you put to silence the gain-sayings of wicked men, and that you thus constrain all who witness your christian walk and conversation, to glorify our Father which is in heaven. Amen.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

FORE-KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

In looking over the comments of Adam Clarke on the second chapter of Acts, we read the following: "God is omniscient and can know all things; but does it follow from this that he must know all things? Again, God has ordained some things as absolutely certain; these he knows as absolutely certain. He has ordained other things as contingent; these he knows as contingent."

It is here asserted that God knows some things as contingent. Did the writer, when he wrote this, know what he said, or did he attach any idea to his own words? What is it to say, that God knows some things as contingent, but to say he knows some things, and does not know them at the same time?

If I send a ship to sea, it is, as respects my knowledge, a matter of contingency whether she returns safely and prosperously or not, but is it so with God? Can he be as ignorant of any event as I am with respect to the result of the voyage in question? Or can God be ignorant of the result of the voyage in question? If so, where would be the use or propriety of my praying to him for the safe return of my ship? Now apply the question to every conceivable event or circumstance, and the result will be the same. If God is ignorant of one event or circumstance, he may be of another, and how do I know what he knows, or what he does not know, and on such a supposition how is it possible for me to pray in faith for any thing?

Dr. Clarke, after immense labor, has produced a voluminous, a learned, and in many respects a useful work, but when he comes to talk of necessity, and contingency, of free agency, and accountability, he is no more to be regarded than a child who is learning his A. B. C. His difficulty lies at the root of his systems. It is the fundamental error lying at the root of all the orthodox systems, the irrational, unscriptural doctrine of endless, unmerciful punishment, a doctrine as impossible to reconcile with reason, as atheism itself. It is a doctrine which I should sooner believe possible on the ground of atheism, than on the ground of divine revelation; for if I believed with the Atheists that the universe was the mere result of contingency, or of the different modifications of an external materiality variously and eternally changing, without any designing or intelligent cause, and when I contemplated what misery these changes had already produced, I might suppose it possible that in these successive changes and revolutions, a period might arrive, when all the innumerable race of mankind, might be re-organized and in a state of prior consciousness, and left without remedy in a state of eternal torment.

But as reason and divine revelation both concur in teaching that every thing which exists, is the result of an infinitely wise, powerful, just, and benevolent being, such a result I hold improbable, not only as respects the whole, but as respects a single individual of the human race. The dreadful doctrine once admitted, that God will punish any of his intelligent offspring to endless duration, and it is at once admitted that God inflicts punishment not for the benefit of the sufferer, but because he delights in the suffering of his creature; and this horrid idea once

admitted, reason can thenceforth discern no safety for any creature in the universe. For such a punishment to be inflicted on one poor, finite, dependant creature, would argue the same injustice and cruelty, as if every creature in the universe were sentenced to the same dreadful doom. Numbers do not alter the principle.

Whatever some may pretend, that reason equally objects to temporal as to eternal punishment, the pretence is based on what the most superficial discerner may see to be false. We can all readily conceive, that to a creature destined to endless happiness, the longest and most dreadful sufferings which may precede, may be made conducive to his eternal felicity; but the reason which God has given to every rational man, at once perceives that no good can possibly be derived from a state of suffering which is never to end.

Thus is no doctrine more plainly taught in the bible than that of man's absolute dependance, and that of God's absolute sovereignty, nor is there any doctrine more consoling to a virtuous, intelligent man, than this, that "God governs all things according to the council of his own will." How infinitely more preferable and rational this appears, than Dr. Clarke's unintelligible system of contingency. By the former we are taught that our destiny is in the hands of a being who is infinitely wise and good, and by the latter we are taught that our destiny is, in a great measure at least, in the hands of a blind contingency, so that God himself may not know what our final destiny is to be. The former is the pure doctrine of christianity; it is the essence of God's word, and the inferences, the plain dictates of common sense.

No man would ever feel disposed to quarrel with the doctrine of the divine sovereignty, or of God's absolute decrees, if he could once be brought to believe in that explicit declaration of God himself, that "he is good to all, and that his tender mercies are over all his works." As to the man who professes to believe and teach that God is good to all, while he teaches at the same time that he will doom the great, or greater part of mankind to endless, unmerciful suffering, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

A creature doomed to endless punishment, is doomed to an unmerciful punishment; an unmerciful punishment is an unjust punishment; and God can no more be unmerciful than he can be unjust.—"If his children forsake his law, he will visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes, but his loving kindness he will not take from them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail." Z. G.

Southold, Aug. 29th, 1832.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

THE DOCTRINE OF ENDLESS MISERY,

Connected with the Christian Religion, destroys its chief consolation.

The belief in the immortality of the soul, or a future state of ceaseless happiness, is one of all others the best calculated to bear up the human mind amidst the trials and sorrows of this mortal life. Erase this from the mind, and what is there left that is worth a name, or where could man look for consolation. There could be no hope beyond the dark valley of the shadow of death. All before him would be impenetrable darkness. There could be no ray of light to cheer or to comfort him.

The belief therefore in a future happy existence being so infinitely calculated to afford comfort and consolation under all circumstances, amid the innumerable sorrows and vicissitudes of this life, how important it is there should be no doctrine taught that would in the smallest degree weaken the christian's faith, or destroy this hope.

This being admitted, it is deemed important to consider what consequences and effects the doctrine of endless misery has upon those who acknowledge it as an article of their faith, and how far the truths and realities of the christian religion are impeded or destroyed by the promulgation of such an unmerciful doctrine.

The effect which the doctrine of endless misery has upon him who believes it, is extensive—it influences his whole life—his disposition feelings and conduct. There is something continually hanging over him which casts a gloom upon his countenance, a deadness in his devotions, a contractedness in his feelings, and selfishness in his actions. And there is no uniformity in his mental or spiritual exercises. At one time, we see him excited to the highest pitch of rapture; he fancies that he has already entered the gates of paradise, and that his praises mingle with angels around the throne of God, while he looks upon the damned in hell, and blesses God for saving him from eternal torments. At another time, in a different frame of mind, he fears that he has forfeited all title to the abodes of the blessed, and is only fit to be cast off forever, and to make his bed in hell, where he is never to have one single ray of hope or mercy. At other times he believes that God has elected him to be an heir of life and glory. Then again the thought of innumerable multitudes being endlessly miserable weakens his faith in the mercy and goodness of God, (for he sees no mercy in endless torment,) —mars the joys and consolations of the hope of future happiness for himself, and wholly unfits him to strengthen or build up the faith of others. The phantom of endless misery is constantly before him. If he exhorts or prays, it is not to unfold the realities and joys of a future state, but to warn his hearers to flee from eternal suffering, to escape the wrath of an offended God; but to do this, they must subscribe to his creed, and join his church. If this is not complied with, he threatens them with the vengeance of heaven, and says, "stand by, for I am holier than thou!"

Thus it is the belief of endless misery affects the feelings, disorders the understanding, and mars the joys and hopes of a future life. If, as can be proved from their sayings and writings, many sincere and devoted christians, have at times, been almost without hope of future happiness, believing the liabilities to eternal death were so great, and the chance of salvation so small, how can it be expected, that those who are regardless of the christian religion, should embrace it readily or willingly, while such impediments are in the way, even of those who have made it the business of their lives. Some of those who have been known as eminent christians have died almost in despair.

The man who is even destitute of the hopes of immortality, would rather remain as he is, than to have his comfort and peace of mind destroyed by the belief that millions of his fellow creatures will suffer eternal torments, and that even his own chance of escape was as one to a thousand. Add to this the awful catalogue of victims, who have been driven to insanity, suicide, and death, by the terrors of an endless hell, and tell me who would not rather choose annihilation, than the hazardous experiment of a belief so comfortless, so full of terror and dismay, and so abhorrent to the best feelings of the human heart.

I should most sincerely say, and I know it would be the language of thousands, if I could not believe the christian religion, its precepts and doctrines, without believing in the gloomy and absurd idea of endless misery, as now connected with it, I would rather pass my days without giving it a thought. It is plain to my mind, therefore, why so many thousands pay no regard to the christian religion. The doctrine

of endless misery being incorporated, as they think, with it, and not knowing how to draw the dividing line, or separate one from the other, they reject it altogether.

Thus it is, that the consolations of the gospel are destroyed, by blind devotedness to this absurd dogma, and thousands who would otherwise be sincere and firm supporters of christianity, pass their lives totally regardless of it, because they can find no relief or consolation in the belief of a future life, if that life may be eternal misery, to one son or daughter of Adam.

N. S. R.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

Messrs. EDITORS—A small pamphlet having the appearance of a "tract," was recently presented me by a friend, purporting to be a "Letter of Rev. A. Judson, (Baptist Missionary at Burmah) to the female members of the Christian Churches in the United States of America."

This Rev. gentleman has taken for his motto the following words, found in 1 Tim. ii, 9—"I will also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, *not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.*" The whole is a powerful appeal to the females of America, for them to "take off their necklaces and earings, to tear away their ribbons and ruffles and superfluities of head-dress," that they may be able to contribute the more largely to the "Missionary cause." I have at present but a reflection or two to offer on reading the following remarks on his 6th page :

"During years that you have been wearing these useless ornaments, how many poor creatures have been pining in want! How many have groaned on beds of abject wretchedness! How many children have been bred up in the blackest ignorance hardened in all manner of iniquity! How many immortal souls have gone down to hell with a lie in their right hand, having never heard of the true God and the holy Savior! Some, yea many precious souls might have been redeemed from the quenchless fire of hell, where now they must lie and suffer to all eternity, had you not been afraid of being thought unfashionable and "not like other folks;" had you not preferred adorning your persons, and cherishing the sweet seductive feelings of vanity and pride."

Now while I have no eager disposition to prevent this pious man from encouraging economy in female dress, I am inclined to fall into a train of reflections not entirely dissimilar from his own. Allowing his notion of "quenchless fire" to be true, and his position to be correct, that some are wallowing in its liquid stream, and must be tortured on its turbid billows to all eternity, as the consequence of extravagance in female dress, I put the question seriously to every christian heart: How many are now dropping the tear of sorrow over the couch of a distressed and languishing parent; how many orphans, unpitied and alone, crave the boon of charity; how many groaning sons of sterile penury can be solaced and comforted, while our "Missionary and Tract Societies" have MONEY TO LOAN?

How many perishing heathen can yearly be snatched from the agonies of "quenchless fire," were our ministers, who "fare sumptuously, and dress in fine linen" to reserve from their annual stipend and daily luxuries, what they can comfortably spare, and send it to these benighted sons of perdition? How many might have been prevented from lying down in ceaseless torments, had the money contributed for the "saving of souls" been applied to this end, instead of being allowed to rest in the "funds?" Only think how many poor victims are wailing in unending misery, who might now be chanting the anthems of celestial melody, had the money which has been expended to ornament the education of every person's daughter, by a knowledge of the melo-

dious piano, been duly appropriated to "Missions?" How many dollars can be spared from the yearly emolument of some American divines, they be decently attired, and their families comfortably supported, to teach those who are growing up in ignorance and becoming "hardened in all manner of iniquity?" If the professed ministers of the gospel are wishing that the female members of their churches should lay aside their "pearls and costly array," let them set the example. And when our brother Judson pens another tract on the eternal misery that has been produced by the "superfluities" of female dress, I hope that he will contrast the fine broadcloth and the large silk sleeves of our priests, with the "ladies' head dress," and show us that they have no desire to be *fashionable*, and are not "cherishing the sweet seductive feelings of vanity and pride," notwithstanding all their sanctity. I would also recommend him to take a more enlarged view of his subject, and bring into the picture the towering steeples, the magnificent architecture, the "ornamental" desks, and the "costly" organs of our "Christian Churches in the United States of America." H.

TRUE BENEVOLENCE.

The benevolence of the gospel lies in actions. The benevolence of our fictitious writers, in a kind of high-wrought delicacy of feeling and sentiment. The one dissipates all its fervor in sighs and tears, and idle aspirations—the other reserves its strength for efforts and execution. The one regards it as a luxurious enjoyment for the heart—the other as a work and business for the hand. The one sits in indolence, and broods in visionary rapture, over schemes of ideal philanthropy—the other steps abroad and enlightens, by its presence the dark and pestilential hells of disease. The one wastes away in empty ejaculations—the other gives time and trouble to the work of beneficence—gives education to the orphan—provides clothes for the naked, and lays food on the table of the hungry. The one is indolent and capricious, and often does mischief by the occasional overflowings of a whimsical and ill-directed charity—the other is vigilant and discerning, and takes care lest his distributions be injudicious, and the effort of benevolence be misapplied. The one is soothed with the luxury of feeling, and declines in easy and indolent satisfaction—the other shakes off the deceitful languor of contemplation and solitude, and delights in a scene of activity. Remember that virtue, in general, is not to feel, but to do; not merely to conceive a purpose, but to carry that purpose into execution; not merely to be overpowered by the impression of a sentiment, but to practice what it loves, and to imitate what it admires.—*Chalmers.*

NATURE.—AN EXTRACT.

Every page of the volume of Nature is fraught with instruction. Not only do the canopy of the heavens, and the luminous orbs which bedeck the glowing hemisphere on a clear frosty evening, declare the glory of the Supreme, but the whole of created existences, however insignificant, simple, or minute they may appear, plainly evince to the contemplative mind the wisdom and power of the Creator; and show that

All Nature is a glass reflecting God
As by the Sea reflected is the Sun,
Too glorious to be gazed on in his sphere.

That man does not receive instruction from the creatures of God is not their fault, but his own. Their language is not dull and languid, but loud and incessant; while he, alas! remains deaf to the reiterated cries of nature; and although 'day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge,' he continues to post on in his career, without once reflecting on the importance of NATURE'S UNIVERSAL CALL TO Stand still and consider the wondrous works of God,

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

JOHN AND THE MOTHER OF JESUS.
The crimson dawn was breaking o'er the hills,
That rear their crested heads in Palestine;
Faintly a few remaining stars gleam'd out,
But the clear moon, that thro' the silent night
Play'd on the bosom of the still blue lake
Of Galilee, had long since left the sky;
Grey quiet shadows, yet in silence hung
O'er the deep valleys of the Holy land,
And the tall cedar, and the graceful palm,
Scarce rear'd their green-tops from the lingering mists;
But here and there was seen a single point
Of dazzling radiance, as the kindling morn
Stream'd o'er the lofty, gilded minarets,
And gorgeous fanes of proud Jerusalem.

Many there were who gazed with joyous hearts
Upon the glorious scene; but there was one
Who, in the silence of her darken'd room,
Knew not of peace or hope: but not alone
The mother of Messiah mourned; o'er her couch
A fair hair'd youth in tearful sorrow hung—
It was the faithful, true one Jesus loved,
And when His hour, that mortals fear, had come,
And hands unholy led him forth to die,
He bless'd the young disciple as her son.—

Twice since that fatal day, the glorious sun
Had risen in its majesty, and yet
That mother's soul had found no rest, her eyes
No sleep. The Sabbath day had come and gone,
And brought for her no healing on its wings.
But he who watch'd her grief now strove to break
Its bands of silence; therefore thus he spake,
And won at last the mourner back to words.

"Mourn, mourn, oh thou most desolate!
For sorrow there is none like thine;
Weep o'er the sadness of thy fate,
And mingle all thy tears with mine.

Bid me not leave thee! I will ne'er
The wounded, mourning dove forsake—

Let me remain with thee, and share
The tears thy many woes awake!"

"Call me not mother! whisper not
Of ties that are forever o'er;
Bless'd as a mother was my lot—
As mother's I shall joy no more!"

"Mourn—but thy sorrow will be o'er
And peace again her portals ope;
Tho' He who could the dead restore
Is in the tomb, there still is hope!"

"Alas, what hope! ye do but mock
The grief no healing balm may reach—
Deem ye the gates of death are broke!

What means thy strange mysterious speech?"

"My mother—once with burning heart,
I drew me from the listening throng,
To ponder on the words, apart,
That drop like manna from His tongue.

When on my soul there fell a light,
That death and darkness could not stain;
It sheds a joy o'er sorrow's night,
And tells me—*He will rise again!*"

He cens'd—but in the mother's breast a hope,
A faith had sprung that would not be repress'd,
Peace on her soul descended like a dove
And slumber settled on her weary eyes,
While in her dreams, hope, nestling at her heart,
Softly repeated—*He will rise again!*"

C. M. S.

* Suggested by reading the narrative "*He is risen*," in the beautiful and affecting little work, entitled, "*Times of the Savior*," by Harriet Martineau.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1832.

NOTICE.

The usual order of exercises at the Orchard-st. Church is resumed. The morning service commences at half past ten, the afternoon at three, and the evening at seven o'clock. The course of Sabbath evening Lectures, on the doctrines of Universalism, proposed to be delivered in this Church, will be postponed for a few weeks. Due notice will be given of their commencement.

ORDINATIONS.

Br. William Whittaker was ordained over the Church and Society of Universalists in Hudson, N. Y. on the evening of Tuesday, the 11th inst. Reading the Scriptures by the Pastor elect. Introductory prayer by Br. I. D. Williamson. Sermon by Br. T. J. Sawyer. Text 1 Tim. iv. 16. Ordaining prayer by Rev. Mr. Whittaker, father of the candidate. Charge and delivery of the Holy Scriptures by Br. I. D. Williamson. Right hand of fellowship by Br. T. J. Sawyer. Address to the Society by Br. Williamson. Concluding prayer by Br. Sawyer. Benediction by the Pastor. The house was completely filled, and the services throughout were listened to with devout attention.

Br. B. H. Fuller was ordained as Pastor of the First Universalist Society in Stowe, Vt. on the 29th ult. Sermon by Br. J. Moore, of Lebanon, N. H. Text Acts xx. 24.

Br. W. W. Wright was ordained in Weston, Vt. on Wednesday, the 12th inst. Sermon by Br. W. S. Balch, of Claremont, N. H.

HUDSON RIVER ASSOCIATION.

This Association held its annual session at Troy, on the 11th and 12th inst. The business was transacted with unanimity, and we trust some measures adopted, which will prove highly beneficial to our cause within the limits of this Association. Letters of fellowship were granted to Brs. B. B. Hallock, of New-York city, J. M. Austin, of Troy, and Br. Gifford, of Albany. Br. LeFevre was installed over the Society in Troy. The Minutes of the proceedings, together with a Circular, will be prepared by Br. I. D. Williamson, of Albany. Our readers may expect them in a week or two.

We select the following article from the N. Y. Evangelist. It discovers a conversion which Br. Leavitt has undergone within the last six months. Then he was a firm and uncompromising Arminian. Now he has adopted our advice, and become a decided and thorough-going Hopkinsian. He here tells us that a moral system being decided upon, "it follows of course that whatever amount of misery is useful to the administration of this moral system, God's benevolence must prompt him to introduce it." He then hints that, "if temporary discipline is enough to secure the full efficiency of this moral system, of course God will know it and adopt such a system. But if he sees that there is no other way in which he can secure so great an amount of this moral happiness on the whole, as by

subjecting the incorrigible (will Br. Leavitt tell us who they are?) to everlasting destruction from his presence and everlasting misery in hell, so his goodness will prompt him to do." We confess this reasoning good. If God can produce more happiness in ten men by rendering five of them as miserable as imagination can conceive, we presume he will do it. Br. Leavitt we believe is a father. Would he test his supposition, we advise him to increase the felicity of his family by making one half of his children the subjects of every species of torment which the heart of a demon on earth could invent. For the purpose of making the subject clear, he may call this "a moral system" and one half of his children *incorrigible*, although, he has never used one quarter of the means in his power for their repentance and amendment. If he will be a good Presbyterian, he need not be particular in his selection of these little *incorrigibles*. When he has succeeded to his wish and increased "upon the whole" the happiness of his family by this simple process, we shall be better prepared to believe that God will act on the same principle.

Br. Leavitt has come to the sage conclusion that, "it would not be benevolence in God to suffer the wicked to enter heaven, to mar its peace and pollute its air." For our part we never heard the contrary suggested. Even wicked Universalists believe and preach that nothing unholy can enter heaven, and that holiness is an indispensable to happiness.

There is one expression in the following article, which gives a poor opinion either of the writer's candor or his judgment. "The same argument," says he, "which the Universalist offers to disprove endless misery, is just as conclusive to prove that there is no misery." The heart must be bad, or the brain muddy indeed, that could make such a declaration. Br. Leavitt is a father, kind, affectionate, and wise. Suppose one of his friends should say, "The same argument which would disprove that he would make his children as miserable as in his power, and as long as he existed, is just as conclusive to prove that he would never chastise them at all." Now a benevolent and wise father will punish his children for their good. He must be a monster who would torment them merely for his love of misery. A benevolent God would subject his earthly children to such a discipline, trials, and sufferings, as would promote and secure their ultimate and increased happiness. A devil would create for the purpose of inflicting endless misery. S.

GOODNESS AND MISERY.

God is supremely and entirely benevolent, and therefore he does all the good he can. Or in more technical language, it is his supreme desire to secure the greatest possible amount of happiness in the universe. To his all seeing mind two general causes may be supposed to have presented themselves. One is, to fill the universe with sentient beings, like animals, or as human beings might be supposed to be, if destitute of will and conscience, capable only of receiving and enjoying the gifts of his bounty—passive recipients of good. The other is, to fill the universe with moral beings, in his own image, capable of happiness like his own, which consists in doing good—beings that can be happy

only in proportion as they are holy. God has chosen the latter, which we call a *moral system*.

This moral system being determined on, as the way in which he could do the most good, or secure the greatest total of happiness in the universe, it follows that every thing else must bend to this. It is in the administration of this moral government that we find misery introduced. The only way in which we can reconcile the existence of any misery at all into the universe under the administration of a benevolent God is, that it is a part of his moral government—a part of that plan, by which he is aiming to make rational beings happy in goodness.

Now it being decided that happiness of this kind is so infinitely above mere sensitive enjoyment, or passive recipiency of good, and that therefore a moral system is on the whole the best to be adopted, it follows of course that whatever amount of misery is useful to the administration of this moral system, God's benevolence must prompt him to introduce it. And of this he alone is the competent judge. If temporary discipline is enough to secure the full efficiency of this moral system, of course he will know it, and adopt such a system. But if he sees that there is no other way in which he can secure so great an amount of this moral happiness on the whole, as by subjecting the incorrigible to everlasting destruction from his presence, and everlasting misery in hell, so his goodness will prompt him to do. It would not be benevolence in God to suffer the wicked to enter heaven, to mar its peace and pollute its air, any more than it would be benevolence to suffer murderers, and pirates and robbers, to go at large, for the terror of good citizens and the desolation of society. The same argument which the Universalist offers to disprove endless misery, is just as conclusive to prove that there is no misery. Or in the hands of the atheist, it proves that there is no God.—N. Y. Evangelist.

EDITORIAL COURTESY.

Two or three weeks since we published an article headed "A Question or Two," from the Baptist Repository, and appended some additional queries addressed to Br. Crosby. Last week we gave Br. Leavitt's *pharisaical* allusion to it, in the short article we copied from the Evangelist, under the chaste title, "More Coalition." In looking over the Baptist Repository of the 14th, we find, *what we suppose to be*, the Editor's reply to our queries. In an article headed "Kind Attentions," he says, "We have noticed in no less than six different papers, as many attacks upon our editorial articles." He goes on to dispose of them in regular order, giving a familiar bow to one, and a repulsive nod to another. Among the awards we find the following :

"With Universalists we seldom dispute!" which is all that could possibly have any reference to ourselves. And this, we suppose, we may regard as an *unanswerable* reply to our queries. We admit that this species of argument is rather overwhelming, though it cannot be regarded as very convincing. In one sense, at least, it is *unanswerable*; for the man who has made that rapid advance in the meek and humble acquirements of the Christian, which places him beyond or above improvement—in *his own estimation*—is proof against all arguments, drawn either from reason or revelation. It is much to be regretted, in these days of boasted progress in the purifying principles of the Gospel of Christ, that the servant should become wiser than the master. We have never been able to find, in the life of

the founder of Christianity, the shadow of an example for this dogmatical spirit in religion, unless it may be his treatment of the Pharisees of old. And this we would particularly caution Br. Crosby not to meddle with, lest, like some fabled Conjurer, who should raise a storm he could not quell, the sentence in a voice of thunder, should revert back to himself, "*Thou art the man!*" How strangely different is this conduct of the pretended ministers of Christ from that of their master. Through his whole sojourn here below, his course was one continued series of kindness and condescension. Though possessed of "power over all flesh," he was never for a moment influenced by feelings of pride or self-exaltation. On the contrary, the accents of forgiveness, of mercy, and persuasion to the practice of virtue, were ever flowing from his meek and unpretending lips. Even when called to judge of those accused of iniquity, he could say, "*Neither do I condemn thee—Go and sin no more!*" But commission a modern minister of this heavenly religion—endow him with a little brief authority from the visible Church, and in circumstances like the above, the very atmosphere which he breathed, would almost curdle with indignation and wrath!

We make no specific application of these remarks to the present case—we are speaking generally. But we must say that there is an exhibition of dogmatism—a principle of self-righteousness about Br. Crosby, at times, singularly at variance, in our humble opinion, with the genuine spirit of the Gospel. We speak not now particularly of the quotation above, but of personal interviews, as we have met with him two or three times. And the man who can, under the profession of religion, unchristianize a large and respectable denomination, and even individually anathematize those who are perhaps as honest and sincere, and possibly, as worthy as himself, and pharisaically refuse any reason therefor, is little calculated to add lustre to the religion he professes.

We have been more particularly induced to notice this subject, from the similarity of the language to that held towards us in one of his personal interviews. We had patiently listened to an entire proscription of our views, when propounding to him some questions touching the propriety of his opinions, we could obtain no answer. He was under no obligation "to dispute the point." And why? Because, we read of those "who are given over to believe a lie, that they may all be damned!" And damned eternally, too, according to his Bible. A summary way, we admit, of disposing of a doctrine which he *cannot*, or *dares not* oppose by open, honorable argument; but a way not very creditable to the christian. He could readily deal in hard names against the doctrine, but if called on for a reason for this, why, the answer is ready, "*with Universalists we seldom dispute!*" And in his paper too, he can wage an eternal war with his Limitarian brethren, on the minor points of difference between them, (the relative propriety, for instance, of observing the *first* or *seventh* day of the week as a Sabbath,) but come to the all-important question of man's destiny, his "*being's end and aim!*"—a question, which determines whether a vast proportion of the intelligent creation shall make their bed in ceaseless and indescribable suffering, or whether in pursuance of the evident object of their creation, they shall rise to realms of blessedness and peace, in full fruition of happiness and joy—we say come to this question, in comparison to which all others sink into nothing, and what is his conduct? The reader will readily draw his own conclusion.

We seek no angry dispute with any one, much less with Br. Crosby, on the subject of religion. We profess a religion of "*Peace on earth and good will towards men!*" But we are frank in

saying, we wish our Limitarian friends to discuss this subject candidly and honestly, or abstain entirely from their abusive slanders and misrepresentation of our doctrine, and conduct towards us hereafter in a manner becoming the Christian, whether we are considered so or not.

Whenever they do this, and treat us as Christians, we can assure them there will be no occasion for "disputing." Till then, we must be allowed the privilege of commenting upon their conduct, whether they will condescend to notice us or not, and to give them occasionally wholesome advice, however unwelcome it may be.—And in pursuance of this, Br. C. will permit us to advise him to use a little more condescension towards his erring fellow men—even to "*dispute*" with them, so long as it can be done in a proper spirit. And above all, he will permit us to recommend to his serious consideration, that "*CHARITY which suffereth long, and is kind—which envieth not, vaunteth not itself, and is not puffed up—which seeketh not its own, thinketh no evil—rejoiceth in the truth—beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things—WHICH NEVER FAILETH!*" P.

CIRCUIT PREACHING.

This subject has of late attracted considerable attention in our denomination. Most of our publications have passed opinions on it, and without exception, we believe, favorably. We are pleased to see this unanimity of feeling, for we approve of the measure, under some form, and we feel assured, that good will grow out of the attention already given it, whether any general arrangements should be adopted or not. Indeed, we perceive that in different sections the principle is already partially commenced, on individual responsibility. And we are not sure but this is the best, if not the only way of commencing them, even if not of continuing them. In process of time a more perfect system might be adopted, should it be deemed politic, or found essential. But in the present state of our order, we think difficulties would occur in effecting any extensive, or at least immediate, organization. In some sections these difficulties would not be as prominent as in others. For instance, wherever societies were numerous or conveniently located, it would be trifling. In fact, here would be the least necessity for the measure; for either two, or three, or four of these societies could at once unite together in employing a preacher, and such places are not long, generally speaking, unsupplied.

There are many places, however, in which we have a few friends, in some instances, perhaps, not more than one, or two, or three open, active ones, where there may have occasionally been preaching, but where no organized societies exist. In these, circuit preaching is the most needed, and in these places will lie all the difficulties of a general organization. A thousand obstacles, imaginary, or otherwise, will rise before the few tried friends we may have, to prevent their immediate association, without some previous labors among them. Had we an abundance of funds, and were we prepared like our limitarian friends, for *extensive Missionary operations*, this particular trouble would vanish at once. But we are not, and it is well perhaps that it is so. At least, 'till our views are materially changed from what they now are, we shall most heartily pray that we may ever be preserved, as a denomination, from all connexion with ecclesiastical or monied establishments, of modern stamp. We had much rather see our cause advance, as it commenced, by the influence of simple, unadorned, yet all powerful truth, unconnected entirely, with artificial aids.

We see no way therefore of bringing about a regular Circuit organization, let it be ever so desirable, until the measure is adopted, in principle, at least, by individual exertion. This seems

absolutely necessary, even to prepare them for the organization of societies. Let our zealous energetic brethren then, in the ministry, strike out convenient Circuits. We do not believe they will lose by it in the end. They must, however, run some risk, as well as those in every other calling. Where two or more can conveniently unite their exertion on the same route, so much the better. Let them persevere for a short time in their labors, and we hesitate not in the belief that they will have abundant evidence of success. In many places where we have perhaps but one or two active friends, there is a general feeling of liberality towards the sentiment, and whenever meetings are held, they are attended by a respectable audience. Let these meetings become regular for only a short period, and respectable Societies will easily be formed; and although the laborer may not become rapidly rich, he will be sure, nevertheless, of receiving a comfortable—a decent living. And when this is effected, there will be little necessity left, for Circuit organization, other than frequent, and perhaps regular exchanges by the ministers. And this should be left, we think, to the voluntary arrangement of both preachers and people, as far as possible.

We seriously dislike the least approach to any thing like ecclesiastical establishments. Christianity is not calculated to prosper under them. It is a plant which flourishes best while kept aloof from the forms and ceremonies—the fashions of the world, and all its artificial aids. However, we have no disposition to retard efforts in behalf of this object. We even rejoice that attention is so generally excited—good will result from it. And if any thing like a general system, should be deemed advisable, let it be, by all means, "purely republican," and in this respect, *unalterable*.

We learn with pleasure, from the Hartford Inquirer, that this subject is to be discussed before the Connecticut State Convention of Universalists, at its session in Berlin, Conn. on the 10th and 11th of October ensuing. We also give extracts below, from some remarks on the same subject, by Br. O. A. Skinner, of the Pioneer and Visitor, Baltimore. P.

"The best means for spreading the great doctrine of universal salvation, has for a long time with us, been a subject of anxious consideration. The measures adopted by the different religious sects to promote their peculiar views, have been critically examined; and in them all, we find much to approve. Those, however, which appear the nearest perfection, were adopted by the two Wesleys. Their plan of circuit preaching, their quarterly meetings, and their class meetings, we consider wise and excellent means, and happily calculated to promote the interests of any cause. The great success which has attended them, is abundant proof of this. We would not say all is right in their church government; we think too much power is vested in the ministers; we think the people should, at least, have an equal voice with them. Indeed, we would have every thing in church government, purely republican; all should be on the broad principle of perfect equality, in rights and privileges.

And to what extent circuit preaching should be carried, is with us a matter of doubt. Whether it would be best, all things considered, to change the stations of all the ministers every year or two, is questionable. But as the views and feelings of our order, render such an arrangement impossible, the only question now is, to what an extent may circuit preaching be carried? The answer is given by the state of our order. It can only extend to those societies, unable to support preaching all the time; and to those ministers, who have no settlements.

Under such an arrangement, no society could languish for want of preaching. When left

destitute by the death of the minister, or when by pecuniary embarrassments, rendered unable to support the weekly ministrations of the word, it would come under the supervision of the circuit. It is well known, that many excellent societies have been ruined for the want of preaching, after the removal of their minister. They become disheartened and perhaps a little indifferent to their cause, and these often lead to entire neglect. Some may say, a society of no more moral courage and persevering zeal than this, is not worth retaining; but none who know human nature and the various changes and discouragements to which societies are subject, would thus speak. We would lay down then as an invariable rule, that every society should be under the supervision of the circuit, when unable to employ the constant services of a minister. Such an arrangement, I know, would require a perfect uniformity in the church government of all societies; but to this there would be no objection, as every society would be a member of the association, and entitled to a vote on all subjects.

The plan then, which we would recommend is this, viz.: that some rule be adopted for the formation of societies, that these societies form themselves into an association, and that this association have the power of stationing the preachers over all the societies unable to settle a minister; but that those, which are able, be permitted to choose their own minister.

The next question which presents itself, is, how shall money be raised to support the circuit preacher? I answer, in the first place, by the societies who enjoy their labors. If the laborer is worthy of his hire, no man should join a society, or attend the services of a minister, without contributing according to his ability for his support. And this must necessarily be one leading rule in all societies. And every society should have preaching in proportion to what it contributes. Some may have six sermons a year, others twenty; and others more. We have now before us several letters, written from different parts of this and other states, soliciting preaching, and offering to contribute to defray the expenses of a journey to the places. We intend to visit them, and hope soon to carry our intended plan into execution. In the mean time we hope to hear from the brethren in other places on the same subject.

We would observe, in the second place, circuit preachers might be supported by contributions from old societies. We have many societies in the order, as large and wealthy, as in any order; and we believe, if quarterly or semi-annual contributions were taken up in them, large sums might be collected, to send the gospel into destitute portions of the country. Other societies of not half their wealth do this; and the benefits resulting therefrom, are seen in the wide spreading influence of the different sects. It is the united voice of Universalists, that their doctrine needs only to be known, to be embraced."

UNIVERSALIST EXPOSITOR.

On a subsequent column will be seen a notice of the transfer of the "Universalist Expositor" to the Editors of the "Universalist," a weekly paper recently commenced in Boston, and devoted to our cause. On our last page, also, will be found an advertisement for the continuance of the "Expositor," or rather, the publication of a substitute for it, to be issued in the same form and under the same character, with the view of following out the original and specific objects of the Expositor. We do not exactly understand this transfer, and the continuance, particularly as one of the former proprietors of the "Universalist Expositor" is connected with the new work.

The Editors of the Universalist say, "No efforts will be spared to render the 'Universalist'

acceptable to the Patrons of the 'Expositor.' It will contain a full share of the same kind of reading, together with a variety of such articles as will, we think, be no less interesting and profitable. And besides—a volume of the 'Universalist' will contain more than twice as much reading matter as a volume of the 'Expositor,' for one half the price." And should sufficient encouragement be offered, they propose, "at the commencement of the next year, to double the present number of pages," making it "sufficiently capacious to contain as many elaborate articles as may be necessary," in addition to "an interesting variety of shorter pieces."

After all, we cannot but regret, that it has been found necessary to adopt this course in regard to the 'Expositor.' We have been much pleased with the 'Universalist,' generally, and wish every success and gratification to its worthy editors, yet we have all the while, and do still think, that a work, like the original design of the 'Expositor,' should be kept wholly in its own peculiar sphere. It should be occupied, entire, as a Repository of Biblical Criticisms of the highest character—to serve the purposes of an able Commentary, if you please, proper to be bound up as a standard work, and placed in the library of the scholar, as well as the simple citizen. We care not by whom published, only give us a work adapted to the wants of the denomination in this respect. And we cannot but hope that the temporary suspension of the 'Expositor,' has satisfied our friends of the necessity of sustaining such a work, and that it will induce renewed exertions in favor of one.

The proprietors of the Expositor and Review, as will be seen by the advertisement, propose "following out the plan originally drawn for the Expositor." If they do this, and make the work what it ought to be, we shall heartily wish them success, without any purpose to detract at all from the merits or interests of the "Universalist."

The editor of the Genius of Liberty has received the following letter from a very disinterested Postmaster, in Cork, Ashtabula Co., Ohio:

"Lewis C. Todd, Sir, Isaac H. Phelps (although an infidel) refuses to take your paper from the office.

"G. H. SECHEVERELL."

In reply, Br. Todd observes: "The P. M. calls him an Infidel. An Infidel is one that is unfaithful to his duty—one that is dishonest and unjust. The P. M. seems to be right in his opinion of him. But in the common use of the term, an Infidel signifies an opponent of Christianity. We do not expect such men to be pleased with our paper. We advocate Christianity—we love Christianity. We prize it above all price. Christianity was among the earliest and happiest associations of our childhood. It came as the softening visions of heaven, over the feelings of our youth. It has mingled in all our maturer meditations. And when the transient glories of earth, have dazzled only as meteors upon the dark ocean of time, Christianity has sustained the trembling spirit with pre-libations of heaven. It is the last comfort of age; the solace of sickness; the friend, when all other friends may fail; the support of virtue; and the living spirit of civilized, social, refined and exalted society. It would be a pleasing, grateful thought, that, when our dust shall be mingled with its mother dust, we have contributed something toward the improvement of our fellow men, in rational Christianity; but nothing could be more painful, than the idea that we had promoted infidelity, and taught mankind to disrespect pure religion, the great system of moral and intellectual law."

PHILADELPHIA ASSOCIATION.

The Meeting of the Philadelphia Association of Universalists, will be held at Hightstown, N. J. on the 3d and 4th days of October next, instead of Princeton, as previously noticed, for reasons which will be fully explained to the session. The friends at Hightstown will please make the necessary arrangements, and extend the notice as widely as possible, that meetings for religious worship will be held on Wednesday and Thursday, the third and fourth days of October. It is expected there will be preaching at Princeton, on the evening of the 3d, and at Kingston on the evening of the 4th. Ministering brethren will please call on Col. S. C. Johnes, Hightstown.

ABEL C. THOMAS,
Standing Clerk.

Philadelphia, Sept. 18th, 1832.

READING, PENN.

Br. Asher Moore, has received and accepted an invitation to become the Pastor of the Society at Reading, and has entered on the duties of his charge.

* * * "W." under the two separate dates of August 11th and September 8th, is received. His favor will appear next week.

We are advised by our Br. A. C. T. of Philadelphia, that absence from the city, has prevented a reply to our review of his article on the "Lord's Supper." We may expect it in season for the next number.

TRANSFER OF THE 'UNIVERSALIST EXPOSITOR' TO THE UNIVERSALIST.

We the subscribers, Proprietors of the 'Universalist Expositor' hereby transfer all our right and title to said work to the Editors and Proprietors of the 'Universalist,' for which we receive a reasonable compensation.

The 'Universalist' is well conducted, its appearance is neat, and we trust, that it will sustain the elevated character of the Expositor, and be an acceptable substitute with our Patrons.

We tender our thanks to the Patrons of the Expositor for the aid which they have extended to us for its support—but the encouragement has not been sufficient to justify us in continuing the publication.

Subscribers obtained for the Expositor which have not been returned to us—may be returned, to the 'Editors of the UNIVERSALIST.'

MARCH, CAPEN AND LYON.
WAIT AND DOW.

RELIGIOUS NOTICES.

Br. L. F. W. Andrews will supply the desk in the Orchard-street Church, on the 5th Sabbath in this month, a week from to-morrow.

Br. S. J. Hillyer, will preach at Long Ridge, to-morrow, 22d inst.; at Stamford, Monday evening, 24th; at Rye, Tuesday evening 25th; at New-Brunswick, Friday evening, 28th, and at Hightstown, N. J. 5th Sunday, 30th Sept.

Br. B. Hallock will preach at Peekskill, on Sunday, the 30th inst.

Br. L. F. W. Andrews, will preach at Kingston, N. J. on Friday evening, the 5th of Oct. and at Hightstown, N. J. on the 1st Sunday of Oct.

LETTERS AND REMITTANCES,

Received at this office, ending September 19th

S. W. Washington City, D. C.; P. M. Green-Hill, \$2; A. P. Bethel; H. S. Ridgefield; Rev. S. J. H. Granby; D. D. & S. H. M. Brooklyn, each \$1; P. M. New Brunswick for J. R. \$2; Rev. T. F. K. Portsmouth, N. H.; H. F. Baltimore; A. W. Bethel, \$1.90; G. H. Peekskill, \$2; B. W. H. Mattituck, L. I. \$2; E. G. Chatham, Conn. \$2; J. S.—I. N. C.—G. R. & V. S. each \$1; D. H.—G. S. & J. S. each \$2; all of Norwalk; H. M. Norwalk, for E. M. Havana, Tioga Co. N. Y. \$1; G. G. Wilton \$2.

BEAUTIFUL EXTRACT.

If there is one law above the rest,
Written in Wisdom—if there is a word,
That I would trace as with a pen of fire
Upon the unsunned temper of a child—
If there is any thing that keeps the mind
Open to angel visits, and repels
The Ministry of ill—'tis human love!
God has made nothing worthy of contempt.
The smallest pebble in the well of truth
Has its peculiar meanings, and will stand
When man's best monuments wear fast away.
The law of Heaven, is love, and though its name
Has been usurped by passion, and profan'd
To its unholy uses through all time,
Still the eternal principle is pure;
And in these deep affections that we feel
Omnipotent within us, we but see
The lavish measure in which love is given.
And in the yearning tenderness of a child,
For every bird that sings above its head,
And every creature feeding on the hills,
And every tree and flower, and running brook,
We see how every thing was made to love,
And how they err, who in a world like this,
Find any thing to hate but human pride.

AUTUMN.

Autumn comes. The spring with her flowers—the summer with her heat and thunder, is past;—and Autumn—sear, fruitful Autumn, appears at last. Well, so it is—and so it has been—and so it will be, while the seasons come and go over our earth. Autumn is pleasant—Autumn is sweet. True, in it there is a shade—a more sober aspect thrown around us. But it is as the soft twilight of eve, closing over the theatre of mirth, of bustle and confusion. Like the youth, who has been, by the flight of time, brought to the sedateness of manhood—so is Autumn. Along the horizon, the dark hills stretch away, bearing the heavy forest—the vales are no more an ocean of living green, but they are wide and naked—the hand of the reaper has been there, and nought but the short, yellow stubble, and the fresh, tender growth which followed the swing of the scythe, lays before the eye. Plenty—the harvest of the year—the toil of the husbandman, is here. Bending to the earth and loaded to profusion, stands a group of yonder trees, whose fruit one by one, as the breeze stirs through its branches, strikes the earth, ripened and delicious, by the sun and rains of the by-gone summer. The song of the bird wakes not the echoes of Autumn—but in its stead the crickets, beneath the soft, bland beams of a meridian moon, join in one solemn song, which throws over the listener, a shroud of thought, pointing backward to the things which have been, which now are past, and which shall be no more. Autumn—Autumn—there is a thousand recollections connected with the season. I love the social few, who have with me passed over the flowers of spring—who have laughed away the sultry hours of summer beneath the projecting arms of the oak, or took the cool draught at the bursting spring—I say, I love to meet them again, when the heat of the summer is tempered away, and Autumn reigns over the wide earth. I love to repeat the sweet communion which we have had together. I love to catch the tear which glistens in their eyes, as they bend along the world below, and catch the expression, which doubly saith, 'All things must fade.' It seems to me that feeling grows stronger at this season. It seems as if we, too, with the departing year, were hastening to a close, and that now, even now, we were treading the threshold of eternity. And again, the rich banquet which is spread over the earth, inspires us with a noble gratitude to its Giver and Benefactor. We see pictured out in 'bold relief,' the certainty of a Supreme Being, and cannot refrain from adoring him for his goodness.

Well, there is an Autumn in the life of man.

Oh may those whom this season has touched, smile sweetly amid Spring and Summer—or, in other words, may they be cheered by the lovely offspring, whose tread is on the sweetest of flowers and such as stand proudly amid the ripening summer. Then the Autumn of man is charming. He can look back and trace his seasons as passed by him, with calm contemplation, and smiling serenity—viewing, in his imagination, his idolized few, following his steps, slowly approaching the spot of felicity which he now occupies;—and fondly stretch his fancy away, when the Autumn, too, is o'er—when its last shade has lingered on his, and his follower's head, and the Winter of death is thrown over the scene.—*Rural Repository.*

Love is a sweeter, surer, and stronger principle of obedience than fear. The Law indeed is a hammer to break the heart; but the Gospel is a key to open hearts. A soul assured of God's love, how it will twine about a precept; suck sweetness out of a command, catch at an opportunity, long for a duty! How doth it go like a bee from flower to flower, from duty to duty, from ordinance to ordinance, and extract the very quintessence of all. Such a soul will send back the streams of its affections into the Ocean. But such as are frightened into obedience by fear, would soon abuse such love. Love returns love, and the love of God alone constrains to genuine obedience.—*S. Clarke.*

“UNIVERSALIST EXPOSITOR.”

As the “UNIVERSALIST EXPOSITOR” has been finally given over, by its former company of Proprietors, (its subscription list being transferred to one of our weekly papers,) the subscribers have formed a new company with the hope of reviving the work. They will continue it under the Title of the

EXPOSITOR:

AND UNIVERSALIST REVIEW; which will be published in the same form, and at the same periods as the Expositor heretofore has been, and on similar paper, with the same size page and type, and at the same price, though the number of its pages will be somewhat increased.

To those acquainted with the former Expositor it may be sufficient to say that we aim at following out the plan originally drawn for that work; with one addition, however, which we trust will increase its value: we mean, the department of Review. That we must maintain the character of the publication as high, at least, as its former standard, we are well aware, unless we would forfeit the patronage which our brother Editors and several of our Associations have, especially of late, extended towards it. To their continued favor we humbly commend the undertaking.

PLAN OF THE WORK.

It will consist chiefly of—

Explanations of Scriptural Phrases and Subjects;

Dissertations on points of Biblical Literature;

Critical Interpretations of Texts;

Expositions, both argumentative and historical, of Religious truth, in general;

Reviews of such important Works as may be deemed specially interesting to Universalists;

A general Review of the present state of our Doctrines and Denomination, in this country, and as far as practicable, in other countries.

HOSEA BALLOU, 2d.

THOS. WHITTEMORE,

WAIT & DOW,

GEORGE W. BAZIN,

Proprietors.

CONDITIONS.

I. The EXPOSITOR AND UNIVERSALIST REVIEW will appear in Numbers of 72 octavo pages each, once in two months; i. e. on the first of November, January, March, May, July and September; making at the end of the year an octavo volume of 432 pages.

II. It will be printed on fine paper and elegant type. The Numbers as delivered to subscribers, stitched in handsome printed covers. A Title Page, Table of Contents, and Index of Subjects, at the end of the year.

III. Price \$2 per annum—payable on receipt of the second Number.

□ Subscriptions and Communications received (post paid) by either of the Proprietors, or at the Trumpet and Universalist Magazine Office, No. 40, Cornhill, Boston.

* * Subscriptions received at this Office.

Prospectus for the Second Volume of the

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER,

Devoted to the Doctrine of Universal Benevolence, the defence of Liberal Principles, generally, in Religion, and miscellaneous reading, of chaste and moral tendency.

The first Vol. of this work will close on the last Saturday in Oct. next. In presenting proposals for the 2d Vol. few observations will be necessary in explanation of its objects, and those few cannot, perhaps, be better expressed than in the language of the prospectus for the first volume. “Its primary design is to ‘plead the cause’ of a slandered and persecuted denomination of Christians, (the Universalists)—to illustrate and enforce their principles, and defend firmly, though as far as possible, with Christian candor, their doctrine from the opprobrium which even professing Christians endeavor, too readily, to fasten upon it; and in thus defending its own, it will advocate the civil and religious rights of all. Professing a sentiment which recognizes the Almighty as our common Father, and mankind as brethren indeed, it can know no exclusive privileges. Whatever it may ask for itself, it asks for ALL.”

From experience thus far in the first Volume, the Publisher is inclined to believe that with reasonable exertion on the part of friends an abundant support may be obtained for the Paper—that even from the city alone, a very respectable patronage may be derived. The importance of sustaining the Paper here, to the cause in which it is engaged, need not be urged, either to friends in the city or country, and the publisher appeals to them, without hesitation, for their support and interest in its behalf—for their active co-operation in extending its circulation, by communicating with those of their friends on the subject, who are known to be friendly. He particularly requests those inclined to patronize the Second Volume, to signify their intentions as early as possible. It is important he should know his probable reliance for support, a reasonable time before the close of the first Volume. Persons unacquainted with the Paper can be accommodated with back numbers, for examination, on application at the Office 85 1-2 Bowery.

TERMS.—The Messenger will be published every Saturday, on a royal sheet, quarto form, close print, at Two Dollars per annum, in advance, or Two Dollars and Fifty Cents if not paid within six months from time of subscribing. Letters to be addressed, post paid, “P. Price, 85 1-2 Bowery, New-York.”

P. PRICE, PUBLISHER.

All letters and communications relating to this paper, must be addressed “P. Price, No. 85 1-2 Bowery, New-York.”

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